

CHAPTER III

BRIEF DIDACTIC ABSTRACT OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE DIVINE INSPIRATION.

It has been our desire that this work should not bear so strictly theological a character, as that Christian women, or other persons not conversant with certain studies, and not acquainted with the sacred languages, should be deterred from the perusal of it. Nevertheless, we should be wanting to part of our object if the doctrine were not, on some points, stated with more precision. We have to request, therefore, that in order to avoid being led off, under another form, into an excessive length of development, we may be allowed to exhibit it here in a more didactic shape, and to sum it up in a short catechetical sketch. We will do little more than indicate the proper place of the points already treated; and will enter somewhat at large into the consideration of those only that have not yet been mentioned.

SECTION I.

CATECHETICAL SKETCH OF THE MAIN POINTS OF THE DOCTRINE.

I. What, then, are we to understand by divine inspiration?

Divine inspiration is the mysterious power put forth

[p.107]

by the Spirit of God on the authors of holy writ, to make them write it, to guide them even in the employment of the words they use, and thus to preserve them from all error?

II. What are we told of the spiritual power put forth on the men of God while they were writing their sacred books?

We are told that they were *led or moved* (φερόμενοι) “not by the will of man, but by the Holy Ghost; so that they set forth the things of God, not in words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.”¹ “God,” says the apostle,² “spake BY THE PROPHETS at sundry times, and in divers manners (πολυμερῶς και πολυτρόπως);” sometimes enabling them to understand what he made them say; sometimes without doing so; sometimes by dreams³ and by visions which he afterwards made them relate; sometimes by giving them

¹ 2 Peter i. 21; 1 Cor. ii. 13.

² Heb. i. 1.

³ Num. xii. 6; Job xxxiii. 15; Dan. i. 17, ii. 6, vii. 1; Gen. xx. 6, xxxi. 10; 1 Kings iii. 5; Matt. 1. 20, ii. 12, 22; Acts ii. 17.

words internally (λόγῳ ἐνδιάθετῳ), which he caused them immediately to utter; sometimes by words transmitted to them externally (λόγῳ προφορικῳ), which he caused them to repeat.⁴

III. But what passed in their hearts and minds while they were writing?

This we cannot tell. It is a fact which, subject besides to great varieties, could not be for us an object either of scientific inquiry or of faith.

IV. Have not modern authors, however, who have written on this subject, often distinguished in the Scriptures three or four degrees of inspiration (*superintendence, elevation, direction, suggestion*)?

This is but idle conjecture; and the supposition,

[p.108]

besides, is in contradiction with the Word of God, which knows but one kind of inspiration. Here, there is none true but suggestion.

V. Do we not see, however, that the men of God were profoundly acquainted, and often even profoundly affected, with the sacred things which they taught, with the future things which they predicted, with the past things which they related?

No doubt they might be so - nay, in most instances they were so - but they might not have been so; this happened in different measures, of which the degree remains to us unknown, and the knowledge of which is not required of us.

VI. What then must we think of those definitions of divine inspiration, in which Scripture seems to be represented as the altogether human expression of a revelation altogether divine; - what, for example, must we think of that of Baumgarten,⁵ who says, that inspiration is but the means by which revelation, at first immediate, became mediate, and took the form of a book (*medium quo revelatio immediata, mediata facta, inque libros relata est?*)

These definitions are not exact, and may give rise to false notions of inspiration. I say they are not exact. They contradict facts. Immediate revelation does not necessarily precede inspiration; and when it precedes it, it is not its measure. The empty air prophesied;⁶ a hand coming forth from a wall wrote the words of God;⁷ a dumb animal reproved the madness of a prophet.⁸ Balaam prophesied without any desire to do so; and the believers of Corinth did so without even knowing the meaning of the words put by the Holy Ghost on their lips.⁹

[p.109]

⁴ Nurn. xx. 6, xxiv. 4; Job vii. 14; Gen. i. 15, xx. 3; Ps. lxxxix. 19; Matt. xvii. 9; Acts ii. 17, ix. 10-12, x. 3, 17, 19, xi. 5, xii. 9, xvi. 9, 10; 2 Cor. xii. 1, 2.

⁵ De Discrimine Revelat. et Inspirationis.

⁶ Gen. iii. 14, &c., iv. 6; Exod. iii. 6, &c., xix. 3, &c.; Deut. iv. 12; Matt. iii. 17, xvii. 5.

⁷ Dan. v. 5.

⁸ 2 Pet. ii. 16.

⁹ 1 Cor. xiv.

I would next observe, that these definitions produce or conceal false notions of inspiration. In fact, they assume its being nothing more than the natural expression of a supernatural revelation; and that the men of God had merely of themselves, and in a human way, to put down in their books what the Holy Ghost made them see in a divine way, in their understandings. But inspiration is more than this. Scripture is not the mind of God elaborated by the understanding of man, to be promulgated in the words of man; it is at once the mind of God and the word of God.

VII. The Holy Ghost having in all ages illuminated God's elect, and having moreover distributed miraculous powers among them in ancient times, in which of these two orders of spiritual gifts ought we to rank inspiration?

We must rank it among the extraordinary and wholly miraculous gifts. The Holy Ghost in all ages enlightens the elect by his powerful inward virtue; he testifies to them of Christ;¹⁰ gives them the unction of the Holy One; teaches them all things, and convinces them of all truth.¹¹ But, besides these *ordinary* gifts of illumination and faith, the same Spirit shed *extraordinary* ones on the men who were commissioned to promulgate and to write the oracles of God. Divine inspiration was one of those gifts.

VIII. Is the difference, then, between illumination and inspiration a difference of kind or only of degree?

It is a difference of kind, and not of degree only.

IX. Nevertheless, did not the apostles, besides *inspiration*, receive from the Holy Ghost *illumination* in extraordinary measure, and in its most eminent degree?

In its most eminent degree, is what none can affirm; in an extraordinary degree, is what none can contradict.

[p.110]

The apostle Paul, for example, did not receive the gospel from any man, but by a revelation from Jesus Christ.¹²

He wrote "ALL HIS EPISTLES," St Peter tells us,¹³ not only in words taught by the Holy Ghost,¹⁴ as had been the OTHER SCRIPTURES (of the old Testament), but according to a wisdom which had been given to him.¹⁵ He had the knowledge of the mystery of Christ.¹⁶ Jesus Christ had promised to give his disciples, not only "a mouth, but wisdom to testify of him."¹⁷ David, when he seemed to speak only of himself in the Psalms, KNEW that it was of the Messiah, that his words were to be understood: "Being a prophet, and knowing that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, God would raise up Christ to sit on his throne."¹⁸

¹⁰ John xv. 26.

¹¹ 1 John ii. 20-27; John xiv. 16-26; vii. 38, 39.

¹² Gal. i. 12-16; 1 Cor. xv. 3

¹³ 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16.

¹⁴ 1 Cor. xi. 13.

¹⁵ 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16.

¹⁶ Eph. iii. 3.

¹⁷ Luke xxi. 15.

¹⁸ Acts ii. 30.

X. Why, then, should we not say that divine inspiration is but illumination in its most exalted and abundant measure?

We must beware of saying so; for thus we should have but a narrow, confused, contingent, and constantly fluctuating idea of inspiration. In fact, -

1. God, who often conjoined those two gifts in one man, often also saw fit to disjoin them, in order that he might give us to understand that they essentially differ, the one from the other, and that, when united, they are independent. Every true Christian has the holy Ghost,¹⁹ but every Christian is not inspired, and such an one who utters the words of God, may not have received either life-giving affections or life-giving light.

2. It may be demonstrated by a great many examples, that the one of these gifts was not the measure of the other; and that the divine inspiration of the prophets did not observe the ratio of their knowledge, any more than that of their holiness.

[p.111]

3. Far, indeed, from the one of those gifts being the measure of the other, one may even say that divine inspiration appeared all the more strikingly the more that the illumination of the sacred writer remained in arrear of his illumination. When you behold the very prophets, who were most enlightened by God's Spirit, heading over their own pages after having written them, and endeavouring to comprehend the meaning which the Spirit in them had caused them to express, it should become manifest to you that their divine inspiration was independent of their illumination.

4. Even supposing the prophet's illumination raised to its utmost pitch, still it did not reach the altitude of the divine idea, and there might be much more meaning in the word dictated to them than the prophet was yet cognisant of David, doubtless, in hymning his psalms, knew²⁰ that they referred to "Him who was to be born of his loins, to sit upon his throne forever." Most of the prophets, like Abraham their father, saw the day of Christ, and when they saw it, were glad;²¹ they searched what the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of the Messiah, and the glory that should follow.²² Yet notwithstanding all this, our Lord attests to us that the simplest Christian, the least (in knowledge) in the kingdom of God, knows more on that subject than the greatest of the prophets.²³

5. These gifts differ from each other in essential characters, which we will presently describe.

6. Finally, it is always the inspiration of the book that is presented to us as an object of faith, never the inward state of him that writes it. His knowledge or ignorance nowise affects the confidence I owe to his words; and my soul ought ever to look not so much to the lights of his understanding as to the God of all

¹⁹ 1 John ii. 20-27; Jer. xxxi. 34; John vi. 43.

²⁰ Acts ii, 30.

²¹ John viii. 56.

²² 1 Peter i. 11.

²³ Mat. xi. 11. Michaelis Introd. tome i. p. 116-129, French translation. (That author thinks, that in this passage *the least* means *the least prophet*.)

[p.112]

holiness, who speaks to me by his mouth. The Saviour desired, it is true, that most of those who related his history should also have been witnesses of what they related. This was, no doubt, in order that the world might listen to them with the greater confidence, and might not start reasonable doubts as to the truth of their narratives. But the Church, in her faith, looks much higher than this: to her the intelligence of the writers is imperfectly known, and a matter of comparative indifference - what she does know is their inspiration. It is never in the breast of the prophet that she goes to look for its source; it is in that of her God. "Christ speaks in me," says St Paul, "and God hath spoken to our fathers in the prophets."²⁴ "Why look ye so earnestly on us," say to her all the sacred writers, "as though by our own power or holiness we had done this work?"²⁵ Look upwards.

XI. If there exist, then, between these two spiritual graces of illumination and inspiration a specific difference, in what must we say that it consists?

Though you should find it impossible to say what that difference is, you would not the less be obliged by the preceding reasons to declare that it does exist. In order to be able fully to reply to this question, it were necessary that you should know the nature and the mode of both these gifts; whereas the Holy Ghost has never explained to us, either how he infuses God's thoughts into the understanding of a believer, or how he puts God's words into the mouth of a prophet. Nevertheless, we can here point out two essential characters by which these two operations of the Holy Ghost have always shown themselves to be distinct: the one of these characters relates to their duration, the other to their measure.

In point of duration, illumination is continuous, whereas inspiration is intermittent. In point of mea-

[p.113]

sure, illumination admits of degrees, whereas inspiration does not admit of them.

XII. What are we to understand by saying that illumination is continuous, and inspiration intermittent?

The illumination of a believer by the Holy Ghost is a permanent work. Having commenced for him on the day of his new birth, it goes on increasing, and attends him with its rays to the termination of his course. That light, no doubt, is but too much obscured by his acts of faithlessness and negligence, but never more will it leave him altogether. "His path," says the wise man, "is like the shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day."²⁶ "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, to reveal his Son in me,"²⁷ he preserves to the end the knowledge of the mystery of Jesus Christ, and can at all times set forth, its truths and its glories. As it was not flesh and blood that had revealed these things to him, but the Father,²⁸ that unction which he received from the Holy One²⁹ abides in him, says

²⁴ 2 Cor. xiii. 5; Heb. i. 1 (êv).

²⁵ Acts iii. 12.

²⁶ Prov. iv. 18.

²⁷ Gal. i. 15.

²⁸ Matt. xvi. 17.

St John, and he needs not that any man teach him; but as the mine anointing teacheth him of all things, and is truth, so, even as he hath been taught by it, he will remain in it. Illumination, therefore, abideth on the faithful; but it is not so with miraculous gifts, nor with the divine inspiration, which is one of those gifts.³⁰

As for miraculous gifts, they were always intermittent with the men of God, if we except the only man who “received not the Spirit by measure.”³¹ The apostle Paul, for example, who at one time restored Eutychus to life, and by whom God wrought such special miracles³² (so as that it sufficed that handkerchiefs and aprons should touch his body and be laid upon the sick, in order to cures being effected); at other times could not relieve either his colleague Trophimus or his

[p.114]

beloved Epaphroditus, or his son Timothy.³³ It is the same with inspiration, which is only the most excellent of miraculous gifts. In the Lord’s prophets, it was exerted only by intervals. The prophets, and even the apostles, who (as we shall show) were prophets, and more than prophets,³⁴ did not prophesy as often as they pleased. Inspiration was sent to them by intervals; it came upon them according as the Holy Ghost saw fit to give it to them (καθὼς τὸ Πνεῦμα ἐδίδου αὐτοῖς ἀποφθέγγεσθαι);³⁵ for “never did prophecy come by the will of man,” says St Peter;³⁶ “but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the holy Ghost.” God spake in the prophets (ἐν τοῖς προφήταις), says St Paul, when he wished to do so, at sundry times (πολυμερῶς), as well as in divers manners (πολυτρότως). On such a day, and at such a time, it is often written, “the word of Jehovah was upon such a man (וַיְהִי רַב־יְהוָה אֵלָיו).” “In the tenth year, on the twelfth day of the tenth month, the word of Jehovah came to me,” said the prophet.³⁷ In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, the word of the Lord came unto John, the son of Zacharias (ἐγένετο ἡμᾶ Θεοῦ ἐπὶ Ἰωάννην);³⁸ and on the eighth day, Zacharias, his hither, was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying. . . .³⁹

So then we ought not to imagine that the divine infallibility of the language of the prophets (and even of the apostles), lasted longer than the times in which, they were engaged in their miraculous task, and in which, the Spirit caused them to speak. Without divine inspiration, they were in most instances enlightened, sanctified, amid preserved by God, as holy and faithful men, in our own days may still be; but then they no more spoke as moved by the holy Ghost; - “their language might still be worthy of the most respectful at-

[p.115]

tion; but it was a holy man that spoke; it was no longer God: they again became fallible.”

²⁹ 1 John ii. 20-27.

³⁰ 1 Cor. xiv. 1; Acts xix. 6.

³¹ John iii. 34.

³² Acts xix. 11, 12.

³³ 2 Tim. iv. 20; Philip. ii. 27; 1 Tim. v. 23.

³⁴ Eph. iii. 4, 5, iv. 11; Rom. xvi. 25, 27.

³⁵ Acts ii. 4.

³⁶ 2 Peter 1. 21.

³⁷ Jer. i. 2, xxix. 30, and elsewhere.

³⁸ Luke iii. 1, 2.

³⁹ Luke i. 59, 67, 41, 42.

XIII. Can any examples be adduced of this fallibility being attached to their language, when unaccompanied with Divine inspiration?

A multitude of instances occur. Men are often, after having been for a time the mouth of the Lord, seen to become false prophets, and mendaciously to pretend to utter the words of Jehovah, after the Spirit had ceased to speak in them; “although the Lord sent them not, neither commanded them, neither spake unto them.” “They speak a vision of their own heart, not out of the mouth of the Lord.”⁴⁰

But without referring to those wicked men, or to the profane Saul, or to Balaam, who were for some time numbered among the prophets, shall it be thought that all the words of king David were infallible during the course of that long year which he passed into adultery? Yet “these,” saith the Scripture, “be the last words of David, the sweet psalmist of Israel: THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD SPAKE BY ME, AND HIS WORD WAS IN MY TONGUE.”⁴¹ Shall it be thought that all the words of the prophet Solomon still continued infallible, when he fell into idolatry in his old age, and the salvation of his soul became a problem for the Church of God? And to come down to Christ’s holy *apostles and prophets* (Eph. iii. 5), shall it be thought that all the words of Paul himself were infallible and that he still could say that “Christ spoke by him”⁴² when there was a sharp contention (παροξυσμὸς) betwixt him and Barnabas;⁴³ or when, in the midst of the council, under a mistaken impression with regard to the person of the High Priest, he “spoke evil of the Ruler of his people,” and cried, “God shall strike thee, thou whited wall;” or further (since there may remain some doubt us to the character of this reprimand), shall it be thought that all the words

[p.116]

of the apostle St Peter were infallible, when, at Antioch, he showed himself “so much to be blamed” (κατεγνωσμένος); when he feared those that came from St James; when he dissembled; and when he forced the apostle St Paul “to withstand him to his face before them all, because he walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel (οὐκ ἦν ὀρθοποδήσας)?”⁴⁴

XIV. What, then, are we to conclude from this first difference which we have recognised as existing between illumination and inspiration, with respect to the duration of those gifts?

We must conclude from it,

1. That these two operations of the Holy Ghost differ in their essence, and not in their degree only.
2. That the infallibility of the sacred writers depended not on their illumination (which, although raised to an extraordinary measure in the case of some of them, they nevertheless enjoyed in common with all the saints), but solely on their divine inspiration.

⁴⁰ Jer. xiv. 14, xxiii. 11, 16; Ezek. xiii. 2, 3.

⁴¹ 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2.

⁴² 2 Cor. xiii. 3

⁴³ Acts xv. 39.

⁴⁴ See Gal. ii. 11, 14.

3. That divinely-inspired words, having been miraculous, are also all of them the words of God.

4. That as our faith in every part of the Bible rests no longer on the illumination of the writers, but on the inspiration of their writings, it may dispense henceforth with the perplexing study of their internal state, of the degree in which they were enlightened, or of that of their holiness; but must stay itself in all things on God, in nothing on man.

XV. If such have been the difference between illumination and inspiration in the prophets and the apostles, as respects the *duration* of those gifts, what has it been as respects their *measure*?

Illumination is susceptible of degrees; inspiration does not admit of them. A prophet is more or less enlightened by God; but what he says is not more or

[p.117]

less inspired. It is so, or it is not so; it is from God, or it is not from God; here there is neither measure nor degree, neither increase nor diminution. David was enlightened by God; John Baptist more than David; a simple Christian possibly more than John Baptist; an apostle was more enlightened than that Christian and Jesus Christ more than that apostle. But the inspired word of David, what do I say? the inspired word of Balaam himself is that of God, as was that of John Baptist, as was that of St Paul, as was that of Jesus Christ! IT IS THE WORD OF GOD. The most enlightened of the saints cannot speak by inspiration, whilst the most wicked, the most ignorant, and the most impure of men, may speak not of his own will (ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ οὐκ ἐπιεῖν), but by inspiration (ἀλλὰ προφητεύσαι).⁴⁵

In a man who is truly regenerated, there is always the divine spirit and the human spirit, which operate at once - the one enlightening, the other darkening; amid the illumination will be so much the greater, the more that of the divine Spirit surpasses that of the human spirit. In the prophets, and, above all, in the apostles, these two elements also are to be found. But, thanks be to God, our faith in the words of Scripture nowise depends on the unknown issue of that combat which was waged between the Spirit and the flesh in the soul of the sacred writers. Our faith goes directly to the heart of God.

XVI. Can much harm result from the doctrine according to which the language of inspiration would be no more than the human expression of a superhuman revelation, and, so to speak, of a natural reflection of a supernatural illumination?

One or other of two evils will always result from it; either the oracles of God will be brought down to the level of the words of the saints, or these last will be raised to the level of the Scriptures.

[p.118]

This is a deplorable consequence, the alternative involved in which has been reproduced in all ages. It became unavoidable.

⁴⁵ John xi. 51.

All truly regenerated men being enlightened by the Holy Ghost, it would follow, according to this doctrine, that they would all possess, though in different degrees, the element of inspiration; so that, according to the arbitrary idea which you would form to yourselves of their spiritual condition, you would be led inevitably sometimes to assimilate the sacred writers to them, sometimes to raise them to the rank of writers inspired from above.

XVII, Might religious societies be mentioned in which the former of these two evils is realized; I mean to say, where people have been led, by this path, to lower the Scriptures to the level of the sayings of saints?

All the systems of the Protestant doctors who assume that there is some mixture of error in the Holy Scriptures, are based on this doctrine; from Semler and Ammon to Eichhorn, Paulus, Gabler, Schuster, and Restig; from M. de Wette to the more respectable systems of Michaelis, Rosenmüller, Scaliger, Capellus, John he Clerc, or of Vossius. According to these theories, the divine light with which the intellects of the sacred writers was enlightened, might suffer some partial eclipses, through the inevitable effect of their natural infirmities, of a defect of memory, of innocent ignorance, of popular prejudice; so that traces of these have remained in their writings, and so that we can perceive in these where their shadows have fallen.

XVIII. Might religious societies be mentioned also, where the latter of these evils has been consummated; I mean to say, where, in consequence of having been willing to confound inspiration with illumination, saints and doctors have been elevated to the rank of divinely inspired men?

Of these, two in particular may be mentioned, the Jews and the Latins.

[p.119]

XIX. What have the Jews done?

They have considered the rabbins of the successive ages of the Dispersion as endowed with an infallibility which put them on a level with (if not above) Moses and the prophets. They have, to be sure, attributed a kind of divine inspiration to holy Scripture; but they have prohibited the explanation of its oracles otherwise than according to their traditions. They have called the immense body of those commandments of men the oral law (הוררה שכעל פה), the *Doctrine*, or the *Talmud* (הלמור), distinguishing it into the *Mishna*, or Second Law (משבה), and *Gémara*, *compliment* or perfection (גמרא). They have said that it passed from God to Moses, from Moses to Joshua, from Joshua to the prophets, from the prophets to Esdras, from Esdras to the doctors of the great Synagogue, and from them to the rabbins Antigone, Soccho, Shemaia, Hillel, Scammai, until at last Juda the saint deposited it in the *traditions* or *repetitions* of the law (משבירה, δευτερωσεις), which afterwards, with their commentary or complement (the *gémara*), formed, first, the Talmud of *Jerusalem*, and afterwards that of *Babylon*.

“One of the greatest obstacles that we have to encounter in dealing with the Jews,” says the missionary MacCaul, “is their invincible prejudice in favour of their traditions and of their commentaries, so that we cannot prevail on them to buy our Bibles without notes or commentaries.”⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Letter from Warsaw, 22d March 1827.

The law they say is salt; the mishna, pepper; the talmuds, aromatics:" "the Scripture is water; the mishna, wine; the gémara, spiced wine." "My son," says rabbi Isaac, "learn to pay more attention to the words of the scribes than to the words of the law." "Turn away your children" (said rabbi Eleazar, on his death bed, to his scholars, who asked him the way of life), "turn away your children from the study of the Bible, and place them at the feet of the wise." " Learn my

[p.120]

son," says the rabbi Jacob, " that the words of the scribes are more agreeable than those of the prophets!"⁴⁷

XX. And what has been the result of these monstrous principles?

It is, that by this means millions and millions of immortal souls, although wandering upon the earth, although weary and heavy laden, although every where despised amid persecuted, have contrived to carry the book of the Old Testament, intact and complete, among all the nations of the whole world, without ceasing to read it in Hebrew every Sabbath, in thousands of synagogues, for the last eighteen hundred years . . . without, notwithstanding all this, recognising there that Jewish Messiah whom we all adore, and the knowledge of whom would be at this day their deliverance, as it behoves one day to be their happiness amid their glory!

"Full well," said Jesus to them, "full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition."⁴⁸

XXI. And what have the Latins done?

They have considered the fathers, the popes, and the councils of the successive ages of the Roman Church, as endowed with an infallibility which puts them on a level with Jesus, the prophets, and the apostles, if not above them. They have differed greatly, it is true, from each other on the doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures; and the faculties of Douay and Louvain, for example, have vigorously opposed⁴⁹ the opinion of the Jesuits, who would see nothing in the operation of the

[p.121]

Holy Ghost but a direction preserving the sacred writers from error; but all have forbidden the explanation of the Scriptures otherwise than by their traditions,⁵⁰ They have thought themselves entitled to say, in all their councils, as did the apostles and prophets at Jerusalem, "*It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us.*" They have declared that it appertained to them to pronounce upon the true meaning of holy Scripture. They have called the immense body of those commandments of men, the *oral law*, the *unwritten traditions*, the *unwritten law*. They

⁴⁷ In the Talmud of Jerusalem - Encycl. Method, at the word *Juifs*.

⁴⁸ Mark vii. 9, see also xiii. and Matt. xv. 3-9. The mischief of those traditions begins at last to reveal itself to the Jews of our days: "The time is come," says the Israelite doctor Creissenach (*Entwickelungs Geschichte des Mosaischen Ritual Gesetzes*, Pref.), "the time is come when the Talmud will precipitate the Jewish religion into the most profound and humiliating downfall, if all the popular teachers of the Jews do not loudly declare that its statutes are of human origin, and may be changed."

⁴⁹ Censure of 1588.

⁵⁰ Council of Trent, session 4, 2d decree of 28th April 1546. - Bellarmin. De Eccl. lib. iii. cap. 14; lib. iv. cap. 3, 5, 6, 7, 8. - Coton, lib. ii. cap. 24, 34, 35. - De Perron contre Tilenus.

have said that they have been transmitted by God, and dictated by the mouth of Jesus Christ, or of the Holy Ghost, by a continual succession.

“Seeing,” says the Council of Trent,⁵¹ that the saving truth and discipline of manners are contained in the written books amid the unwritten traditions, which, having been received by the apostles from the mouth of Jesus Christ, or from the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, by succession of time are come down to us, following the example of the apostolic fathers, the Council receives with the same affection and reverence (*pari pietatis et reverentiæ affectu*), and honours all the books of the Old and New Testament (seeing that God is their author), and *together with them* the TRADITIONS relating to faith as well as manners, as having been dictated by the mouth of Jesus Christ or of the holy Ghost, and preserved in the Catholic Church by continual succession.” “If any one receive not the whole of the said books, with all their parts, as holy and canonical as they have been wont to be read in the Catholic Church, and in the old vulgate translation” (that of Jerome,⁵² which, especially in Job and the Psalms is

[p.122]

crammed with very numerous, very serious, and very evident errors, amid has even been corrected abundantly since by other popes),⁵³ “or knowingly despises the said traditions, let him be accursed!”

They have thus put the bulls of the bishops of Rome, and the decrees of their synods, above the Scriptures. “Holy Scripture,” say they, “does not contain all that is necessary for salvation, and is not sufficient.”⁵⁴ “It is obscure.”⁵⁵ “It does not belong to the people to read Holy Scripture.”⁵⁶ “We must receive with obedience of faith many things that mire not contained in Scripture.”⁵⁷ “We must serve God, according to the tradition of the ancients.”⁵⁸

The bull *Exsurge* of Leo X.⁵⁹ places in the number of Luther’s heresies his having said, “That it is not in the power of the Church, or of the Pope, to establish articles of faith.”

The hull *Unigenitus*⁶⁰ condemns to perpetuity, as being respectively false, captious, scandalous, rash, suspected of heresy, savouring of heresy, heretical, impious, blasphemous, &c., the following propositions:- it is profitable at all times, in all places, and for all sorts of persons, to study the Scriptures, and to become acquainted with their spirit, piety, and mysteries,” (on 1 Cor. xvi. 5.)⁶¹ “The reading of Holy Scripture in the hands of a man of business, and a financier, shows that it is intended for every body,” (on Acts viii. 28.)⁶² “The holy obscurity of the Word of Cod is no ground for the laity’s being dispensed from reading it,” (on

⁵¹ Council of Trent, first decree, session 4.

⁵² It was in vain that the Abbot Isidore Clarius represented at the Council that there was temerity in ascribing inspiration to a writer who himself assures us that he had none (Father Paul, Hist. of the Council of Trent, p. 148 of Edition London, 1676).

⁵³ See Thomas James, *Bellum Papale sive Concordia Discors Sexti V. et Clementis VIII.*

⁵⁴ Bellarmin. *De Verbo Dei*, lib. iv.

⁵⁵ Idem, lib. iii. - Charron, *Verite* 3. - Coton, lib. ii. cap. 19. - Bayle, *traité*.

⁵⁶ Bellarmin. *De Verbo Dei*, Jib. ii. cap. 19.

⁵⁷ Bellarmin. lib. iv. cap. 3, and De Perron contre Tilenus. - Coton, lib. ii. cap. 24.

⁵⁸ Id. Bellarmin. lib. iv. cap. 5. - Coton, Jib. ii. cap. 34, 35. - Council of Trent, sess. 4.

⁵⁹ 1520, Concil., Harduini, t. ix. p. 1893.

⁶⁰ Clement XI. of 8th September 1713.

⁶¹ Proposition 79.

⁶² Proposition 80

[p.123]

Acts viii. 39.) “The Lord’s day ought to be sanctified by the reading of books of piety, and especially of the Scriptures. They are the milk which God himself, who knows our hearts, has supplied for them. It is dangerous to desire being weaned from it.” - (Acts xv. 29. “It is a mistake to imagine that the knowledge of the mysteries of religion ought not to be communicated to that sex (women) by the reading of the holy books, after this example of confidence with which Jesus Christ manifests himself to this woman (the Samaritan).” “It is not from the simplicity of women, but from the proud learning of men, that abuse of the Scriptures has arisen, and heresies have been generated.” - (John iv. 26.) “It amounts to shutting the mouth of Christ to Christians, and to wresting from their hands the holy book, or to keep it shut to them by depriving them of the means of hearing it.” - (1 Thess. v. 2.) “To interdict Christians from reading it, is to interdict children from the use of light, and to subject them to a kind of excommunication,” (on Luke xi. 33.)⁶³

Still more lately, in 1824, the encyclical epistle of Pope Leo XII. mournfully complains of the Bible Societies, “which,” it says, “violate the traditions of the fathers (!!!) and the Council of Trent, by circulating the Scriptures in the vernacular tongues of all nations.” (“*Non vos latet, venerandi fratres, societatem quamdam, dictam vulgo BIBLICAM, per totum orbem audacter vagari quæ spretis S. S. Patrum traditionibus (!!!) et contra notissimum Tridentini Concilii decretum in id collatis viribus ac modis omnibus intendit, ut in vulgares linguas nationum omnium sacra vertantur vol potius pervertantur Biblia.*”) “In order to avert this pest,” he says, “our predecessors have published several constitutions, . . . tending to show how pernicious for the faith and for morals this perfidious institution (the Bible Society) is! (et ostendatur quantopere fidei et moribus vaferrimum hocce inventum noxium sit!)”

[p.124]

XXII. And what has been the result of these monstrous principles?

It is this, that millions and millions of immortal souls in France, in Spain, in Italy, in Germany, and in America, and even in the Indies, although they carry every where intact and complete the New Testament, although they have not ceased to read it in Latin, every Lord’s day, in thousands and thousands of churches, for twelve hundred years . . . have been turned away from the fountains of life, have, like the Jews, “paid more attention to the words of the scribes than to those of the law;” have diverted their children, according to the counsel of Eleazer, “from the study of the Bible, to place them at the feet of the wise.” They have found, like rabbi Jacob, “the words of the scribes more agreeable than those of the prophets.” It is thus that they have contrived, for twelve centuries, to maintain doctrines the most contrary to the Word of God,⁶⁴ on the worship of images;⁶⁵ on the exaltation of the priests; on their forced celibacy; on their auricular confession; on the absolution which they dare to give; on the magical power which they attribute even to the most impure among them, of creating his God with three Latin words, *opere oprato*; on an ecclesiastical priesthood, of which Scripture has never said a word; on prayers to the dead; on the spiritual pre-eminence of the city which the Scripture has

⁶³ Exod. xx. 4, 5.

⁶⁴ Exod. xx. 4, 5.

⁶⁵ Quisquis ehanguerit erga venerabilium imaginum adorationem (προσκύνησιν), hunc anathemizet sancta nostra et universalis synodus! (was written to the Emperor, in the name of the whole Second Council of Nice). (Concil., tom. vii, p. 585).

called Babylon; on the use of an unknown tongue in worship; on the celestial empire of the blessed but humble woman to whom Jesus himself said, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" on the mass; on the taking away of the cup; on the interdiction of the Scriptures to the people; on indulgences; on purgatory; on the universal episcopate of an Italian priest; on the interdiction of meals; so that just as people

[p.125]

annul the sole priesthood of the Son of man by establishing other priesthoods by thousands, just as they annul his divinity by acknowledging thousands of demi-gods or dead men, present in all places, hearing throughout the whole earth the most secret prayers of human beings, protecting cities and kingdoms, working miracles in favour of their worshippers; . . . just so, also, they annul the inspiration of Scripture, by acknowledging by thousands other writings which share in its divine authority, and which surpass and swallow up its eternal infallibility!

It was in opposition to the very similar tenets maintained by the heretics of his time, that Saint Irenaeus said, "For when convicted by the Scriptures, they turn about and accuse the Scriptures themselves, as if they were imperfect, and wanting in authority, and uncertain, and as if one could not find the truth in them, if ignorant of tradition; for that was given, not in writing, but by the living voice."⁶⁶

"Full well," says Jesus to them too, "ye reject the commandments of God, that ye may keep your own traditions! *Bene irritum facitis praeceptum Dei, ut traditionem vestram servetis!*" - (Mark vii. 9.)

XXIII. Without pretending anyhow to explain how the holy Ghost could dictate the thoughts and the words of the Scriptures (for the knowledge of this mystery is neither given to us, nor asked of us), what is it that one can perceive in this divine action?

Why, two things; first, an *impulsion*, that is, an action on the *will* of the men of God, in order to make them speak and write; and, secondly, a *suggestion*, that is to say, an action on their understandings amid on their organs, in order to their producing, first, *within them*

[p.126]

more or less exalted notions of the truth they were about to utter; and, then, *without them* such human expressions as were most divinely suitable to the eternal thought of the Holy Ghost.

XXIV. Meanwhile, must it be admitted that the sacred writers were no more than merely the pens, hands, and secretaries of the Holy Ghost?

They were, no doubt, hands, secretaries, and pens; but they were, in almost every case, and in very different degrees, living pens, intelligent hands, secretaries docile, affected by what they wrote, and sanctified.

XXV. Was not the Word of God, however, often written as suggested by the occasion?

⁶⁶ Adv. Hæres., lib. iii. cap. 2. "Cum enim ex Scripturis arguuntur, mu accusatioinem convertuntur ipsarum Scripturarum, quasi non recte habeant, neque sint ex auctoritate, et quia varie sunt dictæ, et quia non possit ex his inventiri veritas ab his qui nescient traditionem. Non enim per litteras traditam illam, sed per vivam vocem."

Yes no doubt; and the occasion was prepared by God, just as the writer was. "The Holy Ghost," says Claude,⁶⁷ "employed the pen of the evangelists ... and of the prophets. He supplied them with the occasions on which they wrote; he gave them the wish and the strength to do so; the matter, form, order, economy, expressions, mire from his immediate inspiration and direction."

XXVI. But do we not clearly recognise, in the greater part of the sacred books, the individual character of the person who writes?

Far from disowning this, we, on the contrary, admire its being so. The individual character which comes from God, and not from sin and the fall, was prepared and sanctified by God for the work to which it had been destined by God.

XXVII. Ought we, then, to think that all has been equally inspired of God, in each of the books of Holy Scripture?

Scripture, in speaking of what it is, does not admit any distinction. All these sacred books, without ex-

[p.127]

ception, are the word of the Lord. ALL SCRIPTURE, says St Paul (πάσα γραφή), IS INSPIRED BY GOD.

This declaration, as we have already said, is susceptible of two constructions, according as we place the verb, not expressed but understood, before or after the Greek word which we here translate *inspired by God*; - both these constructions invincibly establish, that in the apostle's idea, all without exception, in each and all of the books of the Scriptures, is dictated by the Spirit of God. In fact, in both the apostle equally attests that these HOLY LETTERS (τὰ ἱερά γράμματα), of which he had been speaking to Timothy, are all *divinely inspired Scriptures*.

Now, we know that in the days of Jesus Christ, the whole Church meant ONE SOLE AND THE SAME COLLECTION OF BOOKS by *the Scripture*, the *Holy Scripture* or *the Scriptures*, or the *Holy Letters*, or the Law and the Prophets, (γραφή,⁶⁸ ἡ γραφή ἁγία,⁶⁹ αἱ γραφαί,⁷⁰ or ὁ νόμος καὶ οἱ προφῆται,⁷¹ or τὰ ἱερά γράμματα⁷²). These were the twenty-two sacred books which the Jews held from their prophets, and on which they were all perfectly agreed.⁷³

This entire and perfect divine inspiration of all the Scriptures of the Jews was so fully, in the days of Jesus Christ, the doctrine of the whole of that ancient people of God (as it was that of Jesus Christ, of Timothy, and of St Paul), that we find the following testimony to it in the works of the Jewish general Josephus (who had reached his thirtieth year⁷⁴ at the time when

⁶⁷ Claude. Œuvres Posthumes, vol. iv. p. 228

⁶⁸ Peter i. 20; John xix, 37.

⁶⁹ John x. 35, xvii. 12; Rom. i. 2.

⁷⁰ John v. 39; Matt. xxi. 42, xxvi. 54; Rom. xv. 4; 1 Con xv. 3.

⁷¹ Acts xxiv. 14; Luke xvi. 16, 29, 31; Matt. v. 17, 18; John x. 34.

⁷² 2 Tim. iii. 15.

⁷³ See Krebs and Læsner, on 2 Tim. iii. 15.

⁷⁴ He was born in the year 37. See his Life, Edim. Aureliae Allobr. p. 999.

the Apostle Paul wrote his Second Epistle to Timothy). “Never” (says he, in speaking of “the twenty-two books”⁷⁵ of the Old Testament, which he calls τὰ ἰδίᾳ

[p.128]

γράμματα, as St Paul calls them here τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα), “never, although many ages have elapsed, has any one dared either to TAKE AWAY, or to ADD, or to TRANSPOSE in these any thing whatever;⁷⁶ for it is with all the Jews, as it were an inborn conviction (ΠΑΣΙ δε σύμφυτόν ἐστίν), from their very earliest infancy,⁷⁷ to call them GOD’S TEACHINGS, to abide in them, and, if necessary, to die joyfully in maintaining them.”⁷⁸

“They are given to us” (he says further) “by the inspiration that comes from God (κατὰ τὴν ἐπιπνοίαν τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ); but as for the other books, composed since the times of Artaxerxes, they are not thought worthy of a like faith.”⁷⁹

These passages from Josephus are not quoted here as aim authority for our faith, but as an historical testimony, showing the sense in which the apostle St Paul spoke, and attesting to us that, in mentioning the holy letters (τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα), and in saying that they are all divinely inspired Scriptures, he meant to declare to us that, in his eyes, there was nothing in the sacred. books which was not dictated by God.

Now, since the books of the New Testament are ἱερὰ γράμματα, *Holy Scriptures, the Scriptures, the Holy Letters*, as well as those of the Old; since the apostles have put their writings, and since St Peter, for example, has put ALL THE LETTERS OF PAUL (πάσας τὰς ἐπιστολάς) in the same rank with the REST OF THE SCRIPTURES (ὡς καὶ τὰς λοιπὰς ΓΡΑΦΑΣ), hence we ought to conclude that all is inspired by God in all the books of the Old and New Testament.

[p.129]

XXVIII. But if all the sacred books (τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα) are divinely inspired, how can we discover that such and such a book is a sacred book, and that such another is not one?

This, in a great measure, is a purely historical question.

XXIX. Yet, have not the Reformed Churches maintained that it was by the Holy Ghost that they recognised the divinity of the sacred books; and, for example, has not the Confession of Faith of the Churches of France said in its 4th article, that we know these books to be canonical, and a very certain rule of our faith, not so much by the common accord and

⁷⁵ Contra Apion, lib. i. p. 1837. (δύο μόνα πρὸς τοῖς ἑίκοσι βιβλία). Our Bibles reckon thirty-nine books in mime Old Testament; but Josephus and the ancient Jews, by making one book each of the two books of Samuel, of Kings, and of Chronicles, by throwing together Ruth and Judges, Esdras and Nehemiah, Jeremiah and Lamentations, and finally, Hosea and the eleven minor prophets that follow respectively, into one book, reduced our modern calculation of their sacred books by seventeen units.

⁷⁶ Οὐτε ΠΡΟΣΘΕΙΝΑΙ τις οὐδὲν οὔτε ΑΦΕΛΕΙΝ ἀνάτων, οὔτι ΜΕΤΑΘΕΙΝΑΙ τετόλμηκεν.

⁷⁷ Εὐθὺς ἐκ τῆς πρώτης γενέσεως ὀνομάζειν ἀντὰ ΘΕΟΥ ΔΟΓΜΑΤΑ (according to others: *from the first generation.*)

⁷⁸ Ὑπὸ ἀνάτων εἰ δεοὶ ζήσκειν ἡδέως.

⁷⁹ Πίστεως δὲ οὐχ’ ὁμοίᾳσ ἡξίωται.

agreement of the Church, as by the testimony and the persuasion of the Holy Ghost, which enables us to discern between them and the other ecclesiastical books?

This maxim is perfectly true, if you apply it to the sacred books as a whole. In that sense the Bible is evidently an *ἀυτόπιστις* book, which needs *itself only* in order to be believed. To the man, whoever he be, that studies it “with sincerity and as before God,”⁸⁰ it presents itself evidently, and of itself, as a miraculous book; it reveals mill that is hidden in men's consciences; it discerns the thoughts and affections of the heart. It has foretold the future; it has changed the face of the world; it has converted souls; it has created the Church. Thus it produces in men's hearts “an inward testimony and conviction of the Holy Ghost,” which attests its inimitable divinity, independently of any testimony of men. But we do not think that our Churches ever ventured to affirm that one might be content to abide by this mark for discerning such or such a book, or such or such a chapter, or such or such a verse of the Word of God, and for ascertaining its celestial origin. They think that for this detail one must look, as they did, “to the common accord and agreement of the Church.” We ought to admit as divine the entire code of the

[p.130]

Scriptures, before each of its parts has enabled us to prove by itself that it is of God. It does not belong to us to judge this book; it is this book which will judge us.

XXX. Nevertheless, has not Luther,⁸¹ starting from a principle laid down by St Paul⁸² and by St John,⁸³ said, that “the touchstone by which one might recognise certain scriptures as divine, is this: Do they preach Christ or do they not preach him?”⁸⁴ And among the moderns, has not Dr Twisten also said, “that the different parts of the Scriptures are more or less inspired, according as they are more or less *preaching*; and that inspiration does not extend to words and historical matters beyond what has a relation to the Christian conscience, beyond what proceeds from Christ, or serves to show us Christ.”⁸⁵

Christ is, no doubt, the way, the truth, and the life; the spirit of prophecy, no doubt, is the testimony of Jesus;⁸⁶ but this touchstone might in our hands prove fallacious: 1st, Because many writings speak admirably of Christ without being inspired; 2d, Although all that is to be found in the inspired Scriptures relates to Jesus Christ, possibly we might fail to perceive this divine character at a first glance; and 3d, In fine, because we ought to BELIEVE before SEEING it, that all Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for Correction, and for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God n-may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.⁸⁷

XXXI. ‘What reasons have we, then, for recognising as sacred each of the books which, at the present day, form for us the collection of the Scriptures?’

For the Old Testament we have the testimony of the

⁸⁰ 2 Cor. ii. 17.

⁸¹ In his preface to the Epistles of James and Jude.

⁸² 1 Cor. iii. 9, 10.

⁸³ 1 John iv. 2.

⁸⁴ Oh sic Christum treiben, oder nicht.

⁸⁵ Vorlesungen über die Dogmatik, 1829, I. B. p. 421-429.

⁸⁶ John xiv. 6 - Apoc., xix. 10.

⁸⁷ 2 Tim. iii. 16.

[p.131]

Jewish Church; and for the New Testament the testimony of the Catholic Church.

XXXII. What must here be understood by the testimony of the Jewish Church ?

We must understand by it the common opinion of all the Jew's, Egyptian and Syrian, Asiatic and European, Sadducean and Pharisees,⁸⁸ ancient and modern, good and bad.

XXXIII. 'What reason have we to hold for divine, the books of the Old Testament which the Church of the Jews has given us as such?

It is written, "that unto them were committed the oracles of God;"⁸⁹ which means, that God in his wisdom chose them for being, under the Almighty government of his providence, sure depositories of his written word. Jesus Christ received their sacred code, and we accept of it as he did.

XXXIV. Shall our faith then depend upon the Jews?

The Jews often fell into idolatry; they denied the faith; they slew their prophets; they crucified the King of kings; since that they have hardened their hearts for near two thousand years; they have filled up the measure of their sins, and wrath "is come upon them to the uttermost."⁹⁰ Nevertheless, to them were committed the oracles of God. And albeit that these oracles condemn them, albeit that the veil remains on their hearts when they read the Old Testament;⁹¹ albeit they have for ages despised the Word of God, and worshipped their Talmud; they HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE not to

[p.132]

give us the *book of the Scriptures* intact and complete; and the historian Josephus might still say of them what he wrote eighteen hundred years ago: "After the lapse of so many centuries (ποσούτου γὰρ αἰῶνος ἤδη παρωχηκότος) no one among the Jews has dared to ADD or to TAKE AWAY, or to transpose any thing in the sacred Scriptures."⁹²

XXXV. What, then, have been the warranty, the cause, and the means of this fidelity on the part of the Jews?

We shall reply to this question in but a very few words. Its warranty is to be found in the promises of God; its cause in the providence of God; and its means in the concurrence of the five following circumstances

⁸⁸ See Josephus agt. Appion, liv. i. p. 1037. Philo in Eichorn. Joseph. in Nov. Repert., p. 239. De Ægypticis Judæis; cf. Eichorn-Einheit ins A. T. R. I., § 21, p. 73, 89, 91, 113, 114, 116;. De Sadduceis, § 35, p. 95. And Semler (App. ad liberal., V. T. interpret., p. 11.) Eichorn Alg. Bibl. der Bibi. Litterat. T. IV. p. 275, 276.

⁸⁹ Rom. iii, 2.

⁹⁰ 1 Thess. ii. 16.

⁹¹ 2 Cor. iii. 15.

⁹² See this quotation at question 27.

1. The religion of the Jews, which has carried their respect for the very letter of Scriptures even to a superstitious length.
2. The indefatigable labours of the Masorethes, who so carefully guarded its purity, even to the slightest accents.
3. The rivalry of the Judaical sects, none of which would have sanctioned any want of faithfulness on the part of the others.
4. The extraordinary dispersion of that people in all countries long before the ruin of Jerusalem; for “of old time,” says St James,⁹³ “Moses hath in every (pagan) city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day.”
5. Finally, the innumerable copies of the sacred book diffused among all nations.

XXXVI. And with respect to the New Testament, what are we now to understand by the testimony of the Catholic Church?

By this we are to understand the universal agreement

[p.133]

of the ancient and modern Churches, Asiatic and European, good and bad, which call on the name of Jesus Christ; that is to say, not only the faithful sects of the blessed Reformation, but the Greek sect, the Arminian sects, the Syrian sect, the Roman Sect, and perhaps we might add the Unitarian sects.⁹⁴

XXXVII. Should our faith then be founded on the Catholic Church?

All Churches have erred, or might have erred. Many have denied the faith, persecuted Jesus Christ in his members, denied his divinity, made his cross of none effect, restored the worship of statues and graven images, exalted the priests, shed the blood of the saints, interdicted the use of the Scriptures to the people, committed to the flames those of the faithful who desired to read them in the vernacular tongue, tongue set up in the temple of God him who sits there as a God, have trampled upon the Scriptures, worshipped traditions, warred against God, and cast down the truth. Nevertheless, the new oracles of God have been committed to them, as those of the Old Testament were to the Jews. And albeit these oracles condemn them; albeit for ages they have despised the Scriptures and almost adored their traditions; - they have NOT BEEN ABLE not to give us the Book of the Scriptures of the New Testament intact and complete; and one may say of them, as Josephus said of Jews, “After the lapse of so many ages, never has any one in the Churches dared either to add or take away any thing in the Holy Scriptures.” They have been compelled, *in spite of themselves*, to transmit them to us in their integrity.

XXX VIII. Nevertheless has there not been in

⁹³ Acts xv. 21. Josephus often attests the same fact.

⁹⁴ Following the example of the Scripture, we believe no may employ the word *church* as denoting, sometimes all that are enclosed in the nets of the Gospel, sometimes only all that in these is pure and living. And as for the word *sect* (ἀἵρεσις, Acts xxiv, 11; xxvi. 5; xxxviii 22), following the apostle’s example, we employ it here neither in a good sense nor in a bad sense.

[p.134]

Christendom one powerful sect, which for three hundred years has introduced into the canon of the Scriptures the Apocryphal Books, disavowed as they have been by the Jews⁹⁵ (as even Pope St Gregory himself attests),⁹⁶ and rejected by the fathers of the ancient Church⁹⁷ (as St Jerome attests)?

This, it is true, is what was done for the Latin sect by the fifty-three persons who composed, on the 8th of April 1546, the famous Council of Trent, and who pretended to be the representatives of the CHURCH UNIVERSAL OF JESUS CHRIST.⁹⁸ But they could do it for the Old Testament only, which was entrusted to the Jews and not to the Christians. Neither that Council, nor any even of the most corrupt and idolatrous Churches, *have been able* to add a single Apocryphal Book to the New Testament. God has not permitted this, however mischievous may have been their intentions. It is thus that the Jews have been able to reject the New Testament, which was not committed to them; while they HAVE NEVER BEEN ABLE to introduce a single book of man into the Old Testament. God has never permitted them to do so; and, in particular, they have always excluded from it those which the fifty three ecclesiastics of Trent were daring enough to cause to be inserted in it, in the name of the universal Church.

[p.135]

XXXIX. And what have been the warranty, the cause, and the means of that fidelity, which the universal Church has shown in transmitting to us the oracles of God in the New Testament?

To this question we shall reply but in a very few words.

The warranty has lain in the promises of God; the cause in the providence of God; and the means principally in the concurrence of the following circumstances:-

1. The religion of the ancient Christians, and their extraordinary respect for the sacred texts; a respect shown on all occasions in their churches,⁹⁹ in their councils,¹⁰⁰ in their oaths,¹⁰¹ and even in their domestic customs.¹⁰²

⁹⁵ Joseph. agt. Ap. book I. 8. Euseb. H. E. lib. III., c. ix. x.

⁹⁶ Exposition of the Book of Job. See Father Paul's Hist. of the C. of Trent, book ii. p. 143. (London, 1676.)

⁹⁷ Origen (Euseb. H. E. lib. iv. c. 26). St Athanasius (Pascal Epistle). St Hilary (Prolog. in Psalmos, p. 9. Paris, 1693.) St Epiph. (Lardner, vol. iv. p. 312.) St Gregory Nazianzen (Carm. 33, Op. tom. ii. p. 98).

⁹⁸ In praef. ad libr. Regum; sive Prologo-galeato. (See Lard. vol. v. p. 16-22). Judith, et Tobiae et Macchabæorum libros legit quidem Ecclesia: sed eas inter canonicas Scripturas non recipit (Præfat. in Libros Salom-Epist. 115). See also Symbolum Ruffini, tom. ix. p. 186 (Paris, 1602). "Some thought it strange that five cardinals and forty-eight bishops should so easily define the most principal and important points of religion, never decided before, giving canonical authority to books held for uncertain and apocryphal," &c. - Father Paul's Hist. of the C. of Trent, book ii. p. 153 (London, 1676). Most were Italians.

⁹⁹ Plotius contra Manich., t. i.; apud Wolf. anecd., p. 32 sq. I. Ciampini Rom. vetera monum., i. p. 126 sq. All the Christian congregations in the East, even the poorest, kept a collection of the sacred books in their oratories. See Scholz Proleg.

¹⁰⁰ Cyrill. Alex. in Apol. ad Theodos., imp. Act. Concil. ed. Mansi, t. vi. col. 579, vii. col. 6, ix. col. 187, xii. col. 1009, 1032, al. Prohibition, under pain of excommunication, against selling the sacred book to druggists, or other merchants, who don't buy them to read (6th Council, in Trullo. Can. 68).

¹⁰¹ Corb, byz., i. p. 422, al.

¹⁰² See St Jerome, pref. on Job. S. Chrysost. Hom. 19, De Statuis. Women, says he, are wont to suspend copies of the Gospels from their children's necks. See the 68th canon of the VI. Coun. in Trullo.

2. The pains taken by learned men in different ages to preserve the purity of the sacred text.
3. The many quotations made from Scripture by the fathers of the Church.
4. The mutual jealousy of the sects into which the Christian Church has been subdivided.
5. The versions made from the first ages in many ancient tongues.
6. The number and abundant dissemination of manuscripts of the New Testament.
7. The dispersion of the new people of God as far as the extremities of Asia, and to the farthest limits of the west.

[p.136]

XL. Does it then result from these facts that the authority of the Scriptures is founded for us, as Bellarmin has said, on that of the Church?

The doctors of Rome, it is true, have gone so far as to say, that without the testimony of the Church the Scripture has no more authority than Livy, the Alcoran, or Æsop's fables;¹⁰³ and Bellarmin, horrified no doubt at such impious opinions, would fain distinguish the authority of the Church in *itself* and *with respect to us* (quoad se, et quoad nos). In this last sense, he says, the Scripture has no authority except by the testimony of the Church. Our answer will be very simple.

Every manifestation having three causes, an objective cause, a subjective cause, and an instrumental cause, one may say also that the knowledge that we receive of the authority of the Scriptures has, first of all, for its *objective cause*, the Holy Bible itself, which proves its divinity by its own beauty, and by its own doings; in the second place, for *subjective* or *efficient cause*, the Holy Ghost,¹⁰⁴ who confirms and seals to our souls the testimony of God; and in fine, in the third place, for *instrumental cause*, the Church, not the Roman, not the Greek, more ancient than the Roman, not even the Syriac, more ancient than either, but the Universal Church.

The pious St Augustine expresses this triple cause, in his book against the Epistle of Manicheus, called *Fundamenti*. In speaking of the time at which he was still a Manichean, he says:¹⁰⁵ "I should not have

[p.137]

¹⁰³ Hosius contra Brentium, lib. iii. Eckius, de auth. Ecclesiæ. Bayli Tractat. i., Catech., 9. 12. Andradius, lib. iii. Defens. Conc. Trident. Stapleton, adv. Wittaker, lib. i. c. 17.

¹⁰⁴ Isa. liv. 13, lix. 21.

¹⁰⁵ Evangelio non crederem (according to the African usage for *credidisset*, as confession, lib. ii. c. 8: *Si lunc amarem, for amavissem*) nisi me Ecclesiæ commoveret (commovisset) autoritas (ch. 5). (This, besides, is very classical Latin: *Non ego hoc ferrem*, says Horace, for *tulisset*, lib. iii. ode 14). Eos sequamur qui nos invitant prius credere, quum nondum valemus intueri, ut ipsâ fide valentiores facti, quod credimus intelligere mereamur, non jam hominibus, sed ipso Deo intrinsecus mentem nostram firmante et illuminante (c. 14). Opera August., Paris, Mabillon, t. viii.

believed in the gospel had I not been drawn to it by the authority of the Church;” but he takes care to add: “Let us follow those who invite us first to believe, when we are not yet in a state to see: in order that, being rendered more capable (*valentiores*) by faith itself, we may deserve to comprehend what we believe. Then it will no more be men, it will be God himself within us, who will confirm our souls and illuminate them.”

In this affair, then, the Church is a servant and not a mistress; a depositary and not a judge. She exercises the office of a minister, not of a magistrate, *ministerium non magisterium*.¹⁰⁶ She delivers a testimony, not a judicial sentence. She discerns the canon of the Scriptures, she does not make it; she has recognised their authenticity, she has not given it. And as the men of Sichem believed in Jesus Christ by means of the impure but penitent woman who called them to him, we say to the Church: “Now we believe, not because of thy saying; for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.”¹⁰⁷ We have believed, then, *per eam*, not *propter eam*, through her means, not on her account. We found her on her knees; she showed us her Master; we recognised him, and we knelt down along with her. Were I to mingle in the rear of an imperial army, and should I ask those around me to show me their prince, they would do with respect to him, for me, what the Church has done with regard to the Scriptures. They would not call their regiment the *ecumenical army*; above all, they would not say that the emperor has no authority but what is derived from its testimony, whether as it respected itself or with respect to us; whether *quoad se* or *quoad nos* (to use Bellarmin’s language). The authority of the Scriptures is not founded, then, on the authority of the Church: it is the Church that is founded on the authority of the Scriptures.

[p.138]

XLI. If the authenticity of the Scriptures is proved in a great measure by history, how is their inspiration established?

Solely by the Scriptures.

XLII. But is such an argument rational? Does it not involve a begging of the question, and the proving of inspiration by inspiration?

There would be a begging of the question here, if, in order to prove that the Scriptures are inspired, we should invoke their testimony while assuming them to be inspired. But we are far from adopting this process. First of all, the Bible is viewed solely in the light of an historical document, deserving our respect from its authenticity, and by means of which one may know the doctrine of Jesus Christ, nearly as one would learn that of Socrates from the books of Plato, or that of Leibnitz from the writings of Wolff. Now this document declares to us, in all its pages, that the whole system of the religion which it teaches, is founded on the grand fact of a miraculous intervention of God in the revelation of its history and its doctrines.

The learned Michaelis, who held such loose principles on inspiration, himself declares that the inspiration of the apostolic writings necessarily results from their authenticity. There is no other alternative, says he; if what they relate is true, they are inspired; if they were not inspired, they would not be sincere; but they are sincere, therefore they are inspired.

There is nothing in such reasoning that can be thought like a begging of the question.

¹⁰⁶ Turretini, *Theologia elenct.*, vol. i. loc 2, quæst. 6.

¹⁰⁷ John iv. 42.

XLIII. If it be by the Bible itself that we establish the dogma of a certain inspiration in the sacred books, by what can it be proved that that inspiration is universal, and that it extends to the minutest details of the instructions they convey?

If it be the Scriptures that tell us of their divine inspiration, it is they too that will be able to inform us

[p.139]

in what divine inspiration consisted. In order to our admitting their inspiration on their own sole testimony, it should have sufficed for us to be assured that they were authentic; but, in order to our admitting their plenary inspiration, we shall have something more; for we shall then be able to invoke their testimony as writings already admitted to be divine. It will no longer be authentic books only that say to us, I am inspired; but books, both authentic and inspired, will say to us, I am so altogether. The Scriptures are *inspired*, we affirm, because, being authentic and true, they say of themselves that they are inspired; but the Scriptures are *plenary inspired*, we also add, because, being inspired, they say that they are so entirely, and without any exception.

Here, then, there is neither more nor less than a doctrine which the Bible will teach us, as it teaches us all the rest. And just as we believe, because it tells us so, that Jesus Christ is God, and that he became man; so also we believe that the Holy Ghost is God, and that he dictated the whole of the Scriptures.

SECTION II.

ON THE ADVERSARIES AND DEFENDERS OF THE DOCTRINE.

XLIV. Who are the divines that have impugned the doctrine of the divine inspiration?

We have one general remark to make before enumerating them here, namely, that with the single exception of Theodore of Mopsuestia, that philosophical divine whose numerous writings, so strongly tainted with Pelagianism, were condemned for their Nestorianism in the fifth ecumenical council (Constantinople, 553), and whose principles on the divine inspiration were very loose, - with the exception, we say, of Theodore of Mopsuestia, it has been found impossible to produce, in the long course of the EIGHT FIRST CENTURIES OF CHRIS-

[p.140]

TAINITY, a single doctor who has disowned the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, unless it be in the bosom of the most violent heresies that have tormented the Christian Church; that is to say, among the Gnostics, the Manicheans, the Anomeans, and the Mahometans. St Jerome himself, who sometimes permitted himself, while speaking of the style of certain parts of the sacred books, to use a language whose temerity will be censured by all pious persons,¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ Qui solœcismos in verbis facit, qui non potest hyperbaton reddere, sententiamque concludere. (Comment. in epist. ad Titum. lib. i [ad cap. i. 1.] Et ad Ephes., lib. ii. [ad cap. iii. 1.] See also his, Comment on the Ep. to the Galatians).

nevertheless maintains, even for such passages, the entire inspiration of all the parts of the sacred Scripture;¹⁰⁹ and in that he further sees, under what he calls the grossness of the language and the seeming absurdity of the reasonings, intentions on the part of the Holy Spirit full of profound art and wisdom. And if, transporting ourselves from the days of St Jerome to four hundred years farther down, we come to the celebrated Agobard, who is alleged by Dr Du Pin to have been the first of the fathers of the Church that abandoned the doctrine of a verbal inspiration,¹¹⁰ it is most unjustly, says Dr Rudeibach, that such a charge has been brought against that bishop. It is true, that in disputing with the Abbot Fredigise,¹¹¹ touching the latitude to be allowed to Latin translators of the sacred text, he maintains that the dignity of the Word of God consists in the force of meaning, not in the pomp of words; but he took care to add, that the authority of the apostles and the prophets remains intact, and that no one is permitted to believe that they could have placed a letter otherwise than they have done; for their authority is stronger than heaven and earth.¹¹²

[p.141]

If, then, we would class, in the order of time, the men who controverted the entire divine inspiration of our sacred books, we must place:-

In the 2d cemetery, the Gnostics (Valentine, Cerdo, Marcio, his disciple, &c.) They believed in two equal principles, independent, contrary, and co-eternal; the one good and the other bad; the one the father of Jesus Christ, and the other the author of the law; and, entertaining this idea, they rejected the Pentateuch, at the same time admitting no more of the New Testament than the gospel of Luke, and part of Paul's epistles.

In the 3d century Manes or Manicheus, who, calling himself the *paraclete* promised by Jesus Christ, corrected the books of the Christians, and added his own.

In the 4th century, the Anonmeans or Ultra-Arians (for Arius himself held a more reserved language), who maintained, with their leader Ætius, that the Son, a created intelligence, *unlike*¹¹³ *to the Father*, took to himself a human body without a human soul. They spoke of the Scriptures with an irreverence tantamount to the denial of their entire inspiration. "When pressed with Scriptural reasons," says St Epiphanius, "they escape by saying: That it was as a man that the apostle said those things;" or, "Why do you bring the Old Testament against me?" And what does the holy bishop add? "It was to be expected that those who denied the glory of Christ, should deny still more that of the apostles."¹¹⁴

In the 5th century, Theodore of Mopsuestia, chief of the Antioch school, an able philosopher, and learned but rash divine. All that remains to us of his numerous works, is some fragments only, preserved to us by other authors. His books, as we have said, were condemned (two hundred years after his death) at the Council of Constantinople. There were quoted there, for example, his writings against Appollinarius, in which he had said that the book of Job is merely a poem derived from a pagan source; that Solomon had no doubt re-

¹⁰⁹ Proem, in Ep. ad Galat., lib. ii.

¹¹⁰ Du Pin, doctor of the Sorbonne. Prolegom. on the Bible, liv. i. v. 256.

¹¹¹ Agobard, adv. Fredeg. lib. c. 9-12.

¹¹² Rudelbach, Zeitschrift, 1st part, 1840, p. 48.

¹¹³ Ἀνόμοιος: hence their name.

¹¹⁴ Epiphanius, Advers. hæres., LXX. vi. Ætiii salutem. Confut., vi.

[p.142]

ceived λόγον γνώσεως, but not λόγον σοφίας; that the Song of Songs is but a long and insignificant epithalamium, without any character prophetic, historical, or scientific, and in the manner of the Symposium of Plato, etc, etc.¹¹⁵

In the 7th century, Mahomet (whose false religion is nothing more than a heresy of Christianity, and who speaks of Christ at least as honourably as most part of the Socinians have done,) - Mahomet acknowledged, and often quoted as inspired, the books of the Old and New Testament; but he said they had been corrupted, and, like Manes, he added his own.

In the 12th and 13th centuries, as it would appear, there sprang up and took a regular shape, first among the Talmudist Jew's,¹¹⁶ the system of those modern doctors who have thought fit to class the various passages of holy Scripture under various orders of inspiration, and to reduce the divine inspiration to more or less natural proportions. It was under the double influence of the Aristotelian philosophy, and of the theology of the Talmud, that the Jews of the middle ages, differing much in this from the ancient Jews,¹¹⁶ imagined this theory. That was the time of the Solomon Jarchis, the David Kimchis, the Averroeses, the Aben-Ezras, the Joseph Albos; and above all of *Moses Maimonides*, that Spanish Jew who has been called. the *eagle of the doctors*. Maimonides, borrowing the vague terms of the peripatetic philosophy, taught that prophecy is not an exclusive product of the action of the Holy Ghost. Just, says he, as, if the *intellectus agens* (the intellectual influence that is in man) associate itself more intimately with reason, there results from it the *secta sapienturn speculatorum*; and as, if that agent operates more on the imagination, there results from it the *secta politicorum, legislatorum, divinatorum, et præstigatorum*; so also, when this

[p.143]

superior principle exercises its action in a more perfect manner on those two faculties of the soul at once, the result is the *secta prophetarum*. Almost all the modern Jewish doctors have adopted the ideas of Maimonides; and there, also, seems to have originated Schleiermacher's modern system of inspiration. It is in starting from these principles that the doctors have admitted several degrees of inspiration in the prophets. Of these, Maimonides reckoned sometimes eight, sometimes eleven. Joseph Albo reduced them to four, and Abarbanel to three. They applied these distinctions of different degrees of inspiration to the division of the Old Testament into *Law, Prophets, and Hagiographa* (תורה ונביאים וכתובים) The *kethubim*, according to him, had not received the prophetic spirit (רוח נבואה), but only the Holy Spirit (רוח הקדש), which, according to him, was no more than a human faculty, by means of which mm mail pronounced words of wisdom and holiness.¹¹⁷

The modern German school of the adversaries of inspiration, seems accordingly to be a mere reproduction of the theory of the rabbins of the 13th century, or a borrowing from the Talmudist doctors of our own days.

In the 16th century, Socinus¹¹⁸ and Castellio¹¹⁹ maintained that the sacred writers sometimes show a failure of memory, and might err on subjects of slight importance.

¹¹⁵ Acta concilii Constantinop., ii. 65, 75, apud Harduin. Acta Concil., tom. iii. p. 87-89.

¹¹⁶ See Josephus agt. Apion. lib. i. c. 7, 8; and Phibo, cd Hæschel, p. 515, and p. 918.

¹¹⁷ Mosis Maimonides, More Nebuchim, part ii. c. 37, et 45. Rudelbach (*ut supra*) p. 53.

¹¹⁸ De Author. Script.

In the 17th century, three orders of adversaries, according to the celebrated Turretine,¹²⁰ combated inspiration. These were, besides the infidels properly so-called (*atheos et gentiles*): 1. the fanatics (*enthusiastæ*), who charged Scripture with imperfection in order to exalt their own particular revelations; 2. those of the Pope's sect (*pontificii*), who scrupled not, says he, to betray the cause of Christianity by alleging the corruption of the original text (*fontium*), in order to exalt their Vul-

[p.144]

gate translation; 3. The rationalists of different classes (*libertini*), who, without going out of the Church, unceasingly attempted to shake the authority of the Scriptures, by pointing to difficult passages and apparent contradictions (ἄπορα καὶ ἐναντιοφάνη).

In the latter half of the 18th century, this last class of adversaries became very numerous in Germany. Semler gave the first impulsion to what he called the liberal interpretation of the Scriptures; he rejected all inspiration, denied all prophecy, and treated all miracle as allegory and exaggeration.¹²¹ Ammon, more lately, laid down positive rules for this impious manner of explaining the miraculous facts.¹²² The writings of a legion of doctors no less daring, Paulus, Gabler, Schuster, Restig, and many others, abound in practical applications of these principles. Eichhorn, more recently still, has reduced into system the rationalist doctrine of prophecy.¹²³ De Wette, in his *Preliminary Manual*, appears not to see any true prediction in the prophets, and not to find any difference between those of Israel and those of the Pagan nations, beyond the spirit of morality and sincerity which characterises monotheism, and which, says he, purified Hebrew prophecy, while it was wanting to the *seers* among the pagans.¹²⁴ Hug, in his Introduction to the New Testament Scriptures,¹²⁵ nowhere speaks of inspiration. Michaelis admits it for a part of the Scriptures, and rejects it for the other. So did John Leclerc in the last century.¹²⁶ Rosenmüller is still more wavering in his sentiments.

Of late years, however, there have been German di-

[p.145]

vines more reverentially inclined, who have admitted different degrees of inspiration in the different parts of the Scriptures; by distinguishing the passages which do not relate say they, to salvation; and making bold to see in them, as Socinus and Castellio did of old, slips of memory, and errors, on subjects which, in their eyes, seemed of little importance.

Among the English, too, there have been seen, of late years persons otherwise respectable, who have allowed themselves to range the sentences of God's Word under different classes of inspiration.

¹¹⁹ In Dialogis.

¹²⁰ Theol. Elenct., loc. 2, quæst. 5.

¹²¹ Preface to Schultens's Compendium, on the Proverbs, by Vogel. Halle, 1769, p. 5.

¹²² De interpret. narrationum mirabilium. N. N. (at the beginning of his Ernesti.)

¹²³ Einleitung in das alte Testament; 4 edit., Götting., 1821, tom. iv. p. 45.

¹²⁴ Zweyte Verbesserte Auflage. Berlin 1822, p. 276. Lehrbuch. Anmerkungen.

¹²⁵ Einleitung, &c., 2d edit. 1821.

¹²⁶ Sentiments de quelques theologiens de Holland. Lett. XI. XII. La Chamb., Traité de la Religion, tom. iv. p. 159, amid the following.

XLV. Can many illustrious doctors of the Church be mentioned as maintaining the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures?

It is the uniform doctrine of THE WHOLE CHURCH down to the days of the Reformation.

“Hardly,” says Rudelbach, “is there a single point with regard to which there reigned, in the eight first ages of the Church, a greater or more cordial unanimity.”¹²⁷

To the reader who wishes to consult these testimonies of history, we recommend the dissertation lately published on this subject by the learned doctor of Ghogau, already mentioned. The author, commencing with a review of the first eight hundred years of the Christian era, establishes the following principles there, by very numerous quotations from the Greek and Latin fathers.

1. The ancient Church, with one unanimous voice, teaches that all the canonical writings of the Old and New Testaments ARE GIVEN BY THE HOLY SPIRIT of God; and it is on this sole foundation (and independently of the fragmentary information that human im-

[p.146]

perfection may acquire from them) that the Church founded her faith on the perfection of the Scriptures.

2. The ancient Church, following out this first principle, no less firmly maintains the INFALLIBILITY of the Scriptures as their *sufficiency* (αὐτάρκειαν) and their *plenitude*. She attributes to their sacred authors not only *axiopistia*, to wit, a fully deserved credibility, but also *autopistia*, to wit, a right to be believed, independently of their circumstances or of their personal qualities, and on account of the infallible and celestial authority which caused them to speak.

3. The ancient Church, viewing the whole Scripture as an utterance, on the part of God, addressed to man, and dictated by the Holy Ghost, has ever maintained that there is NOTHING ERRONEOUS, nothing useless, nothing superfluous there; and that in this divine work, as in that of creation, one may always recognise, amid the richest plenty, the greatest and the wisest economy. Every word there will be found to have its object, its point of view, its sphere of efficacy. “*Nihil otiosum, nec sine signo, neque sine argumnto apud eum.*” - (*Irenæus*); πάν ἡμα ... ἐργαζόμενον τὸ ἑαυτοῦ ἔργον. - (*Origen*.) It is in vigorously establishing and defending both these characters of the Scriptures, that the ancient Church has shown the elevated and profound idea she entertained of their divine inspiration.

4. The ancient Church has always maintained that the doctrine of holy Scripture is the SAME THROUGHOUT, and that the Spirit of the Lord gives utterance in every part of it to one and the same testimony. She vigorously opposed that science, falsely so called (I Tim. vi. 20), which even in the first ages of her history, had taken a regular shape in the doctrines of the Gnostics, and which, daring to impute imperfection to the Old Testament, made it appear that

¹²⁷ Kaum ist irgend em Punct, worüber im Alterthume eine grössere und freudigere Einstimmigkeit herrschte. (Zeitschrift vom Rudelhaeh und Guerike, 1840, 1st vol. p. 1-47. Die lebre von der Inspiration der heiligen Schrift, mit Berücksichtigung der neuesten Untersuchungen darüber, von Schleiermacher, Twesten und Steudel.)

there were contradictions between one apostle and another apostle, where there were really none.

5. The ancient Church thought that inspiration ought chiefly to be viewed, it is true, as a passive state, but as

[p.147]

a state in which the human faculties, FAR FROM BEING EXTINGUISHED or set aside by the action of the Holy Ghost, were exalted by his virtue, and filled with his light. She has often compared the soul of the prophets and of the apostles to “a stringed instrument, which the Holy Ghost put in motion, in order to draw out of it the divine harmonies of life. - (*Athenagoras.*)¹²⁸ “What they had to do, was simply to submit themselves to the powerful action of the Holy Ghost, so that, touched by his celestial influence, the harp, though human, might reveal to us the knowledge of the mysteries of heaven.” - (*Justin Martyr.*)¹²⁹ But, in their view, this harp, entirely passive as it was as respects the action of God, was the heart of a man, the soul of a man, the understanding of a man, renewed by the Holy Ghost, and filled with divine life.

6. The ancient Church, while it maintained that there was this continued action on the part of the Holy Ghost in the composition of the Scriptures, strenuously repelled the false notions which certain doctors, particularly among the Montanists, sought to propagate respecting the activity of the Spirit of God, and the passiveness of the spirit of man in divine inspiration; as if the prophet, ceasing to have the mastery of his senses, had been in the state which the pagans attributed to their sibyls (μανία or ἐκστάσει). While the Cataphrygians held that an inspired man, under the powerful influence of the divine virtue, loses his senses (*excidit sensu, adumbratus, silicet, virtute divina*),¹³⁰ the ancient Church maintained, on the contrary, that the prophet DOES NOT SPEAK IN A STATE OF ECSTASY (non loquitur in ἐκστάσει)¹³¹ and that one may distinguish by this trait false prophets from the true. This was the doctrine held by Origen against Celsus (liii. vii. c. 4); as also

[p.148]

of Miltiades, of Tertullian, of Epiphanius, of Chrysostom, of Basil, and of Jerome, against the Montanists.

7. The ancient Church in her endeavours, by means of OTHER DEFINITIONS, which we shall not indicate here, to give greater clearness to the idea of divine inspiration, and to disentangle it from the difficulties with which it was sometimes obscured, still further showed how much she cherished this doctrine.

8. The ancient Church thought that if the name of action on the part of God is to be applied to inspiration, it must be understood to extend TO WORDS as well as to things.

9. The ancient Church, by her constant MODE OF QUOTING the Scriptures, in order to the establishment and defence of her doctrines; by her manner, too, of EXPOUNDING and COMMENTING on them; and, in fine, by the USE which she recommends all Christians,

¹²⁸ Legatio pro Christianis, c. 9.

¹²⁹ Ad Græcos cohortatio, c. 8.

¹³⁰ Tertullian adv. Marcion. lib. iv. ch. 22.

¹³¹ Hieronym., Proem. in Nahum. Præfat. in Habak. in Esaiam. Epiphan. adv. hæreses, lib. ii. Hæres., 48, c. 3.

without exception, to make of them as a privilege and a duty; the ancient Church, by these three habitual practices, shows, still more strongly, if it be possible, than she could have done by direct declarations, how profoundly attached she was to the doctrine of a verbal inspiration.

And it is not only by her exposition of the Word that the ancient Church shows us to what point she held the entire inspiration of the Scriptures, as an incontrovertible axiom; she will show you this still more strongly, if you will follow her while she is engaged IN RECONCILING THE APPARENT CONTRADICTIONS sometimes presented by the Gospel narratives. After having made an essay of some explanation, she does not insist upon it; but hastens to conclude, that whatever be its validity, there necessarily exists some method of reconciling those passages, and that the difficulty is only apparent, because the cause of that difficulty lies in our ignorance, and not in Scripture. “Whether it be so, or otherwise (she says with Julius Africanus), it matters not, the Gospel remains entirely true (τὸ μέντοι ἔυαγγέ-

[p.149]

λιον πάντως ἀληθεύει)!¹³² This is her invariable conclusion as to the perfect solubility of all the difficulties that one can present to her in the Word of God.

10. The ancient Church was so strongly attached to the doctrine of the personality of the Holy Spirit, and of his sovereign action in the composition of the whole Scriptures, that she made no difficulty in admitting at one and the same time the greatest variety and the GREATEST LIBERTY in the phenomena, in the occasions, in the persons, in the characters, and in all the external circumstances, under the concurrence of which that work of God was accomplished. At the same time that she owned with St Paul, that in all the operations of this Spirit, it is one and the self-same Spirit that divideth to every man severally as he will (1 Cor. xii. 11), she equally admitted that in the work of divine inspiration, the divine causation was exercised amid a large amount of liberty, as respects human manifestations. And be it carefully remarked, that you will nowhere find, in the ancient Church, a certain class of doctors adopting one of these points of view (that of the divine causation and sovereignty), and another class of doctors attaching themselves exclusively to another (that of human personality, and of the diversity of the writer’s occasions, affections, intelligence, style, mind other circumstances). “If this were so,” says Rudelbach, “one might justly accuse us of having ourselves forced the solution of the problem, instead of faithfully exhibiting the views of the ancient Church.” But no; on the contrary, you will often see one and the same author exhibit, at once and without scruple, both of these points of view: the action of God and the personality of man. This is what we see, for example, abundantly in Jerome, who, even when speaking of the specialties of the sacred writers, never abandons the idea of a word introduced *by* God into their minds.

[p.150]

This we farther remark in Irenæus, who, while he insists more than any one else on the action of God in the inspiration of the Scriptures, is the first of the fathers of the Church that relates in detail the personal circumstances of the Evangelists. This is what you will find again in St Augustine; this is what you will see even in the father of Ecclesiastical History, Eusebius of Cæsarea, who gives so many details on the four authors of the Gospels, and who, nevertheless, professes the most rigorous principles on the plenary inspiration of the Canonical Scriptures.

¹³² In his letter to Aristides, on the agreement of the Gospels that relate the two genealogies of Jesus Christ. – (Euseb., Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 7.)

11. The ancient Church shows us more completely still, by two other traits, the idea she had formed of divine inspiration, by the care she took, on the one hand, TO FIX THE RELATIONS which the doctrine of divine inspiration bore to the doctrine of the gifts of grace; and, on the other, To EXHIBIT THE PROOFS of inspiration.

In fine, although the ancient Church presents this spontaneous (ungesuchte) and universal agreement in the doctrine of inspiration, we must not imagine that this great phenomenon is attached, as some have been fain to say, to some particular system of theology, or may be explained by that system. No more must we regard this wonderful agreement as the germ of a theory that was to establish it, at a later period in the Church. No. The very assertions of an opposite opinion which, from time to time, made themselves heard on the part of the heretics of the first centuries, and the NATURE OF THE REPLIES that were put forth by the ancient Church, clearly demonstrate, on the contrary, that this doctrine was deeply rooted in the Church's conscience. Every time that the fathers, in defending any truth by passages from Scripture, succeeded so far as to drive their adversaries into the impossibility of defending themselves, otherwise than by denying the full inspiration of the divine testimonies, the Church thought the question was decided. The adversary was tried; he had no more to say for himself; he denied the Scripture to be the Word of God! What more remained to be done, but to com-

[p.151]

pel him to look his own ill-favoured argument in the face and to say to him, See what you have come to! as one would bid a man who has disfigured himself; look at himself in a glass? And thus the fathers did.

Such are facts of the case; such is the voice of the Church.

We had at first brought together, with the design of giving them here, a long series of passages, taken first from Irenæus,¹³³ Tertullian,¹³⁴ Cyprian,¹³⁵ Origen,¹³⁶ Chrysostom,¹³⁷ Justin Martyr,¹³⁸ Epiphanius,¹³⁹ Augustine,¹⁴⁰ Athanasius,¹⁴¹ Hilary,¹⁴² Basil the Great,¹⁴³ and Gregory the Great,¹⁴⁴ Gregory of Nyssa,¹⁴⁵ Theodoret,¹⁴⁶ Cyril of Alexandria;¹⁴⁷ then, the most revered

¹³³ Advers. Hæreses, lib. ii. c. 47. Lib. iii. c. 11. Lib. iv. c. 34.

¹³⁴ De animâ, c. 28, Advers. Marcion. lib. iv. c. 22. De Præscript. advers. hæret., c. 25. Advers. Hermog. c. 22.

¹³⁵ De Opere et eleemos. p. 197-201. Adv. Quirin., Adv. Judæos, præfat.

¹³⁶ Hom. xxxix. in Jerem (quoted here ch. VI. sect. 1.) Homil. ii. in cumd. (cap. xix. & I.) Homil. xxv. in Matth. Ejusdem Philocalia, lib. iv. Commentar. in Matth. p. 227-428, (edit. Huet.) Homil. xxvii. in Numer. - in Levit., homil. v.

¹³⁷ Homil. xlix. in Joan. Homil. xl., in Joan. v. Homil. ix., in 2 Tim. iv. Serm. 33, de utilit. lect. Script. Serm. 3, de Lazaro.

¹³⁸ Apol. 1. c. 53, and 35, 50, 51. Dial. cont. Tryph., cap. 7. Ad Græcos cohort., c. 8.

¹³⁹ Σύντομος λόγος περὶ πίστεως. De doctrin. Christi. lib. ii. c. 9. De Pastor., cap. 2. Epist. xlii.

¹⁴⁰ Epist. xcvi. (ad Hieronym.) De unitate Ecclesiæ. c. iii. t. ix., p. 341. (Paris, 1694.)

¹⁴¹ Contra Gentes, t. b. p. 1. De Incarnat. Christi. (Parisiis 1627.)

¹⁴² Ad Constant. Aug., p. 244. De Trinit. lib. 8. (Parisiis, 1652.)

¹⁴³ Comment, in Isaiam, t. i. p. 379. (Ed. Bened.) Homil. xxix, advers. calumniantes S. Trinit. In Ethicis regni xvi. lxxx., cap. 22.

¹⁴⁴ Moralia in Job, præfat., c. i.

¹⁴⁵ Dialog. de anima et resurrectione, t. i. edit. Græcolat. p. 639. Do cognit. Dei cit. ab. Eutthymnio in Panoplia, t. 8.

¹⁴⁶ Dial. i. Ἐπὶ τῆς ἀποκατάστασης. Dial. ii. Ἀσύγγυτοι. In Exod., Qu. xxvi. In Gen., Quest. xlv.

¹⁴⁷ Lib. vii. cont. Jul. Glaphyrorum in Gen. lib. ii.

fathers of after centuries; and, finally, the most holy doctors of the Reformation.¹⁴⁸ But we soon perceived that all these names, were we to give them by themselves, would seem nothing better than an idle appeal to the authority of

[p.152]

men; and were we to give them along with the passages referred to, in full, we should run into an excessive multiplication of words.

We shall proceed, therefore, with a careful examination of the difficulties and the systems that are opposed to the doctrine of a plenary inspiration. Those difficulties constitute what are objections, and those systems what are rather evasions. The two next chapters we shall devote to the study of both.

Converted to pdf format by Robert I Bradshaw, August 2004.

<http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/>

¹⁴⁸ See Lardner, vol. ii. p. 172, 488. 475, Haldane, The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, p. 167 to 176.